



World Christian Fellowship

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Galatians

Lesson 52 – Fruit of the Spirit

Joy

Galatians 5:22-23, But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Joy is often associated with happiness or the blessedness of our situation.

Other terms that are often used are:

- joyful,
- rejoice, and
- gladness.

Joy or rejoicing is a fruit that is brought into the life of a devoted Christian by the Spirit of God.

The word is used many times in both the Old and New Testaments.

The Greek word "**Chara**" is used in the New Testament which appears about 133 times.

While all kinds of people can have emotional feelings of joy over various things, the Bible seems to be using this word (both in Old and New Testaments) with reference to the person who has a relationship with God that was made possible by their obedient faith.

In the Bible, joy is a deep inner gladness regardless of circumstances going on around you. That means whether you are rich or poor, sick or healthy, successful or struggling, you can still have a feeling of gladness or pleasure deep down inside. Now, you may not feel like smiling on the outside, but you can still smile on the inside.

This joy does not seem to be an emotional feeling for the moment and then it is gone, but something that is lasting.

Reasons for Joy

1. Joy over a right relationship with God (Old Testament)

Psalms 16:11, *You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

Psalms 51:12, *Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.*

Psalms 35:9, *And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord; It shall rejoice in His salvation.*

Isaiah 61:10, *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

2. Joy over a right relationship with God (New Testament)

Matthew 13:20, *But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;*

Matthew 13:44, *“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

1 Peter 1:8, *whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,*

Romans 15:13, *Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

3. Joy over the Hope of our Heavenly Reward.

Luke 6:23, *Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.*

1 Peter 4:13, *but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.*

Philippians 4:1, *Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.*

1 Thessalonians 2:19-20, *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?²⁰ For you are our glory and joy.*

3 John 1:4, *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*

4. Things that bring Joy to the child of God

Proverbs 21:15, *It is a joy for the just to do justice, But destruction will come to the workers of iniquity.*

Isaiah 29:19, *The humble also shall increase their joy in the Lord, And the poor among men shall rejoice In the Holy One of Israel.*

Hebrews 13:17, *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

1 John 1:4, *And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.*

Circumstances

Joy does not depend upon external circumstances, but in spite of such. This joy comes because of a relationship with God that is deep and abiding.

John 15:11, *"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.*

John 17:13, *But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.*

This joy is there in the midst of "manifold temptations!"

James 1:2, *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,*

It is there, with deepness, even in the midst of persecution of all kinds.

Matthew 5:10-12, *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
¹¹ Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

This joy comes from living righteously and living in peace with our fellow brothers and sisters. (**Romans 14:16-19**)

It should be obvious that the "joyful" life can be lived in the midst of any kind of circumstances.

The devout child of God finds joy in truth, righteousness, godliness, and faithfulness to God.

Because the above is true, no man with all of his vile ways can take away our joy.

John 16:22, *Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.*

Possibly, one of the best examples to show the above concept is that of our Lord.

Hebrews 12:2, *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

What he had to endure was not joyful, but the outcome of what he endured brought salvation to many souls. Thus, the Christian who sows tears because of the terrible circumstances of life can also reap joy because of his relationship with God.

Psalms 126:5, *Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.*

Matthew 5:4, *Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.*

Jeremiah 31:13, *"Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, And the young men and the old, together; For I will turn their mourning to joy, Will comfort them, And make them rejoice rather than sorrow.*

He can also make a joyful noise unto the Lord in spite of those circumstances.

Psalms 66:1, *Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth!*

Conclusion

We believe that "joy" is a state of mind based upon our relationship to God and the promises of God.

It is not some emotional feeling of excitement for the moment and then gone, rather an abiding in Christ.

If we maintain our relationship with God, our joy should be full.

Nehemiah 8:10, *Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”*